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Spring 2015

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Bridgewater College

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Greetings

Dear BC Families,

As the spring semester at BC begins, we continue to focus on providing your student with a safe environment in which to live and learn. This issue of Eagle Families highlights some of the programs and services we have at BC to support your student as they grow in mind, body and spirit. We are looking forward to a semester filled with opportunity and learning!

Suzanne Bushman
Presidential Spouse
Chair, BC Family Council

2014-15

Bridgewater College Family Council Board

Suzanne Bushman, Chair
First Lady of Bridgewater College

Beverly & Cornelius Brown

Adrianna Cowan-Waddy

Karla and Brad Hallock

Rhonda and Randy Harris

Judith Hasty

Anita (Bush) Helm

Karen Cadell-Lee and Mike Lee

Nancy and Allen Phibbs

Suzu Shober Sauerwald

Acquenetta and Robert Thurston

A Day in the Life of Sarah Burchfield '15

10 a.m. Sarah, a senior communication studies major, heads to her first class, Communication Theory with Dr. Michele Strano. Sarah's days are full with classes and her involvement in various clubs and organizations as a student leader, especially Active Minds.

11 a.m. Sarah's second communication studies class is Communication, Sex and Gender with Dr. Melanie Laliker. She is also taking Abnormal Psychology with Dr. Alan Eby and Communication Law and Ethics in the afternoon. Sarah wants to be an "advocate and leader in mental health."

2 p.m. Sarah is attending another class or devoting time to Active Minds, an organization dedicated to raising mental health awareness among college students. Sarah says that she is most proud of their presence at the events that they've run. As part of a leadership team of three for the BC chapter (Sarah is the president), she helps to plan and run events such as "Send Silence Packing," a traveling exhibition dedicated to telling the stories of young adults whose lives were lost to suicide.

Sarah says, "It's so important to have an outlet and provide resources for people. They pass by and read the messages, and we're able to meet them how and where they need to be met." As someone who deals with anxiety, Sarah appreciates the way Active Minds has helped her to come to a greater acceptance of it, to be able to talk about it and to realize that she is not alone.

3 p.m. Sarah goes to work out at either the Funkhouser Center or the fitness room in the Wright-Heritage Link. As she completes a routine that includes the elliptical machine, weights and cardio, she believes she not only relieves stress, but also gains a more positive outlook on life.

6 p.m. She heads to one of her many club meetings. In addition to Active Minds, Sarah is involved with the Pinion Players, BC's student-run theater organization, and BC Allies, which promotes awareness and understanding of LGBTQ issues in the campus community. Sarah says that what she loves most about BC is the "amazing community," where people "accept you for who you are."

Her career goal is to work in mental health-related public relations, advocacy and/or public education, and to eventually attend graduate school for social work or health communication. "I want to help people live a better life."



Student Resources

Dr. Robert Andersen Interim Director of Academic Advising and Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
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Randy Hook Director of Counseling Services
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Crystal Lynn Title IX Coordinator
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It's On Us: Preventing Sexual Assault on our Campus

Sexual assault on college campuses is one of the most talked-about issues in higher education right now. Bridgewater College is committed to the safety of every student, as well as providing an environment free



from discrimination. Numerous campaigns and training sessions at Bridgewater College have highlighted efforts to prevent sexual misconduct and make awareness and sensitivity to survivors widespread on campus.

One of our main objectives is to ensure that if a student discloses a possible act of sexual misconduct to someone, that person will know how to be supportive and get that student to the resources that can help them. Behind the scenes, all residential staff, resident assistants, faculty, coaches and the department of student life participated in sessions regarding their responsibilities to report sexual misconduct and how to respond to survivors with sensitivity and support.

It is important that students are reminded

regularly of the importance of this issue, and the College has continued to strengthen both our policies and our programs in this area. Programs providing information on the College's definitions related to sexual assault and consent, clear communication, resources available both on and off campus, as well as how the College adjudicates situations are required of new students during Welcome Week, and, throughout the year, we continue certain programs and offer additional ones to ensure that students are hearing this message over and over again. For the first time this year, all new students participated in an online, video-based bystander intervention program, "Every Choice." The aim of this program is to reduce campus sexual assault, dating/domestic violence and stalking by equipping students with realistic, actionable bystander intervention tools. Previous generations were taught to "mind your own business," so bystander intervention works to correct this by asking students to say something if they see anything, to intervene and to help keep each other safe.

A few of the many initiatives on campus included:

- "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes," a campaign specifically aimed at including men as part of the solution. Men were asked to walk a mile in women's shoes as a show of support for women on our campus.
- The Red Flag Campaign, a national campaign bringing awareness to dating

violence. This included such events as a Wear Red Day and a student photo project in which more than 400 of our students had their photo taken holding a red flag, pledging that if they saw red flags in anyone's relationship they would say something.

- The semester was capped by participation in the national White House-led campaign, "It's On Us." A public awareness campaign that urged all students, faculty and staff at colleges and universities to take an online pledge, "It's On Us" is about creating an environment where sexual assault is unacceptable and survivors are supported.

As a family member, what can you do to further an environment of safety on campus?

1. Encourage your student to take the pledge at itsonus.org if they haven't already and to share it with friends via social media.
2. Listen with empathy and support to anything your student wishes to tell you. Let your student know you are there for them no matter what.
3. Talk with your student about these issues and encourage them to be an active bystander who steps in if they see something that does not seem right.
4. Remind them of the resources available to them. (See box below.)

AVAILABLE RESOURCES/SUPPORT:

Confidential on-campus reporting options

Counseling Center: 540-828-5402

Health Services: 540-828-5384

College Chaplain: 540-828-5383

Official on-campus reporting options

Title IX Coordinators:

Crystal Lynn: 540-828-5356

Jean Willi: 540-828-5400

Campus Police: 540-828-5609

Any Department of Student Life staff, athletics coach or faculty member

Off-campus resources

Town of Bridgewater Police Department:
540-828-2611

Collins Center Crisis Hotline: 540-434-2272

Sentara RMH Medical Center: 540-689-1000

Striking the Balance

Chip Studwell, director of academic support

Developing effectively functioning adults is the philosophy that guides what I do in my work with college students.

College is the training ground to prepare for adulthood.

The life tasks for 18-23 year olds are to learn to relate to different people, resolve relationship conflicts, make decisions more autonomously, manage emotions, be responsible for college living and learning expectations, cope with uncertainties, seek resources, persist to the desired outcome and be responsible for the consequences of choices. If students develop in these ways, they will be equipped to earn good grades in a meaningful major and find a job.

Young adult development is a process of change.

Similar to the one-year-old learning to walk, with one hand on the coffee table while stepping out, students are exploring new things, getting feedback from their experiences and formulating who they will be as adults.

Young adult development can be as exciting and challenging for us as it is for our students.

As parents, how do we strike the balance between telling them what's ahead and shielding them from disappointment, or reminding them of pitfalls and allowing them to experience and grow from their choices?

1. Remember the goal: to develop effectively functioning adults.

When I meet with students, I help them learn ways to handle concerns. Teaching them effective coping mechanisms empowers them and prepares them to handle future situations.

2. Encourage your student to seek out resources at Bridgewater.

Expanding the resources students seek to resolve a situation is healthy. Being a full member of the community means being informed about the available resources and, when needed, using them.

3. Check the thoughts behind your words.

I learned when I was parenting two college students that when I called with my agenda – “Did you get your paper done?” or “Have you studied for your test yet?” that my question of interest was seen by my girls as implying that I didn't think they were capable of doing it. Encouragement conveys faith. Even if it doesn't work out, having your student handle it is an opportunity for growth.

4. Changing your relationship.

The prospect of our kids not needing us as much as they become more competent can be scary. Yet the reality is that with healthy development comes an opportunity for a richer relationship that is based less on need and more on mutual interest and sharing.



Spiritual Safety

Robbie Miller, College Chaplain

When you first think about safety, physical well-being usually comes to mind first. As chaplain, I do offer support to any student in crisis, which could include visiting students who are hospitalized or suffering physically to offer concern and support. But there is also a spiritual safety that we take seriously at Bridgewater.

Consistent with our mission of educating the whole person, we encourage students to explore and develop the spiritual dimension of their lives in a variety of ways. However, there are no religious requirements here, because we believe spirituality and religion must be personally chosen, not institutionally imposed. Students seeking to grow spiritually in their college years should feel safe and comfortable with their choice, just as students not seeking such growth should feel safe and comfortable with theirs. In short, every member of our community should feel safe being who they are and be able to respect others for who they are, no matter what their spiritual direction may be.

Toward that end, we recently created a campus Interfaith Board consisting of students, faculty and staff. By stimulating conversation and raising awareness, the board hopes to encourage a safe and welcoming environment in which all are able to live and work together for the common good. As chaplain, I am committed to ensuring that every member of our community feels safe to pursue their spiritual path, wherever that path may lead.

Every member of our community should feel safe being who they are and be able to respect others for who they are, no matter what their spiritual direction may be.



Taking Safety Seriously

Nick Picerno, Campus Police Chief

Your student is away from your protection for the greater part of four years. At Bridgewater College, we recognize that sense of concern, and we empathize with parents, as many of us felt that same sense of anxiety when our children left for college. The staff of the Bridgewater College campus police department continually asks one question whenever we are confronted with an issue involving a student: "What resolution would we wish for if the student was our son or daughter and how would we wish it to be handled?" We fully accept that obligation, and it is a privilege.

Please encourage your student to carefully consider the following when it comes to staying safe:

- **Sign up for the Bridgewater College Emergency Alerts.** You only receive them if you sign up. Two numbers can be registered, so you and your student can both receive alerts if you wish. Your student will need to register your name and cell phone number if you wish to receive alerts and should follow the instructions to the right.
- Ask your student to **add emergency numbers to their cell phone.** The campus police department emergency number is 540-828-5609. They should also consider adding the phone numbers of their area coordinator and resident advisors.
- Encourage your student to **be mindful of their surroundings.** It's always important to think about the following:
 - Are there people around me?
 - Is this area well lit?
 - Have I told someone where I'm going and what time I expect to return?

- Do I know the person from whom I accepted a ride?
- Are my doors locked?
- Never let someone you don't know into your dorm.
- If your student wishes to have a **safety escort to or from a location on campus**, all they need to do is call the campus police, and we will come meet them.
- When crossing the streets around campus, **always cross in a cross-walk.** Remember to look when crossing to make sure vehicles are yielding before you cross.
- **Always err on the side of caution and trust your intuition.** Encourage your student not to share personal information or implicitly trust anyone.

Your student's experience at Bridgewater College will be a rich and rewarding time in their life. At the campus police department, we are resolved to ensure their time here is rewarding and, most importantly, safe.

Sign-up Process for Emergency Alerts

1. Log into MyBC (mybc.bridgewater.edu.)
2. Select WebAdvisor for Students from the menu on the right hand side of the page.
3. Click "Emergency Alerts" at the bottom of the Communication menu.
4. Provide the information requested.

(Only students can complete this process, though they can also sign you up using your information.)

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